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Testimony to the Judiciary Committee in Support  
of HB 6599 *An Act Concerning Discrimination*

I have come here in support of this bill for many reasons, including obvious personal reasons – but the most important reason is that I have a daughter, Luna, that is transgender.

As early as three years old, Luna showed signs of being transgender – from wearing a blanket as a dress or playing with her stuffed cats instead of her action figures. While she seemed happy, she was in her own world and was very shy and quiet.

As the years went by, Luna exhibit more and more signs of being female and, in September 2009, at 12 years of age, Luna came out to me. I was relieved and elated that she had the courage at twelve years of age to say to me “I just want to be myself; I want to be a girl.”

Over the next several months, Luna slowly took the first steps in being herself. In March of 2010 at a Day of Silence Rally at her school, Classical Magnet here in Hartford, she got up before the assembly and told them “I am transgender.” She received a thundering round of applause from the crowd and a number of students and teachers came up to her to personally show their support. It was another milestone; Luna’s coming out to her school mates and the acceptance she received.

Over that last sixteen months, my daughter has grown in so many ways now that she can finally be herself. She has blossomed and come out of the shell that she had been living in. I have never seen her so happy!

But with every good thing, there inevitably comes some bad as well – and that does not have to be. Luna has had her share of confused encounters with folks not so accepting and that is truly unfortunate. We are a state that has accepted same-sex marriage and yet we do not have protections in place for the transgender community. You would think that we all living in Alabama or Kansas. For a state such as Connecticut to not yet have protections for the transgendered community is a travesty; to continually turn a blind eye towards any type of discrimination, is support of discrimination.

I ask you to please let this be the year that the State of Connecticut puts protections in place for the transgendered community by amending our state statutes to include “gender identity and expression.” I ask you to let my daughter grow up in a state that lets her be herself with the protections she and every other transgender individual should have had years ago.

Thanks for listening.